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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION FROM
FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Poland

Poland

DATE OF INFORMATION 1950

SUBJECT. Economic - Foreign trade

Economic - Foreign trade

DATE DIST. 3 Jul 1950

HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspapers

Daily newspapers

WHERE
PUBLISHED Warsaw; Oslo; Lodz, Stockholm

Warsaw; Oslo; Lodz, Stockholm

NO. OF PAGES 3

DATE
PUBLISHED 19 Mar - 27 May 1950

19 Mar - 27 May 1950

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

LANGUAGE Polish; Norwegian; Swedish

Polish; Norwegian; Swedish

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REVIEWS FOREIGN TRADE ACTIVITIES

1949 FOREIGN TRADE TOPS 1948 -- Rzeczpospolita, No 87, 28 Mar 50

According to the Ministry of Foreign Trade, Polish foreign trade in 1949 reached a total of 5,006,000,000 rubles, an increase of 19.3 percent over 1948.

Total imports amounted to 2,530,500,000 rubles, or an increase of 22 percent over 1948. This was 96 percent of the imports planned for 1949, resulting from economies in 1949 which permitted the curtailment of certain foreign imports. In comparison with 1948 there was a considerable decrease in imports of agricultural commodities, although large quantities of meat, wheat, and edible fats were imported. Imports of industrial raw materials increased. Imports of raw materials for the production of chemical fertilizers increased twofold; imports of hides and rubber increased over one half; imports of wool, cotton, and other textile materials increased from 12 to 40 percent; and imports of ore and metal concentrates increased 25 percent.

The plan for importing investment goods in 1949 was fulfilled 117 percent. This constitutes a 50-percent increase over 1948.

The general breakdown of imports for 1949 is as follows: raw materials and semifinished commodities, 63.6 percent; consumers' goods - agricultural, 8.8 percent, and industrial, 6.5 percent; and investment goods, 21.0 percent.

Exports in 1949 amounted to 2,476,000,000 rubles, or an increase of 16 percent over 1948. This constitutes 97 percent of the exports planned for 1949. With lower imports it was possible to channel a larger amount of goods to the domestic market.

The breakdown of exports for 1949 is as follows: raw materials and semi-finished commodities, including coal and coke 46 percent, 63.8 percent; agricultural commodities, 20 percent; and industrial commodities, 16.2 percent.

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The USSR is the chief supplier of investment goods, cotton, ore, nonferrous metals, fats, and petroleum products. It is also the most important customer for Polish industrial products, and imports rolling stock, chemicals, rolled products, metal products, coal, cement, and textiles.

There were also important increases in trade with the people's democracies as compared with 1948. Poland's trade with Hungary increased threefold, and smaller increases were registered in trade with Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania, and the German Democratic Republic. Trade with the USSR and the people's democracies amounted to 44 percent of the Polish foreign trade in 1949, an increase of 25.4 percent over 1948 in terms of value.

Trade relations have also been established with the Chinese People's Republic. These relations form the basis for a bright outlook for future trade agreements.

The share of overseas countries in Polish trade increased from 5 percent in 1948 to 7 percent in 1949. Trade agreements concluded in 1949 with Pakistan, Hindustan, Egypt, and Israel point to further improvement in trade with overseas countries.

POLISH COAL TOO EXPENSIVE FOR NORWEGIANS -- Norges Handels og Sjøfartstidende, No 117, 25 May 50

In connection with a report that Swedish importers were negotiating with the Poles about coal prices, Mr Nore of the Norsk Brenselimport (Norwegian Coal Import Board) was asked his opinion regarding coal prices. He said:

"As long as there is a shortage of coal in Europe, that is, as long as we cannot altogether cover our requirements from other countries such as Germany, the Saar, and Great Britain, where the prices are lower, we shall have to pay what the Poles demand. It is, however, not only the price of Polish coal that is high; freight rates, as well, are comparatively high because of the price of bunker coal and other expenses in Polish ports which, due to Norway's devaluation, rose by 1.5 kroner per ton of cargo taken from Polish ports.

"The Poles must be aware of the fact that the high prices they now demand must cause a conversion from coal to oil-burning, and it is incomprehensible that they can think that their interests are well served by this procedure. As a matter of fact, they do not seem very eager to sell coal on the Scandinavian market, as it must be clear to them that all former coal consumers who have now converted to oil will not go back to coal unless the price of this fuel is reduced to some 20-30 percent below that of oil."

POLES LOWER COAL PRICES -- Dagens Nyheter, No 140, 27 May 50

The interruption in the Swedish negotiations with the Poles on coal did not last very long. On 26 May, the parties met again and reached an agreement on shipments for the next 5 months. The Poles lowered their prices considerably, so that they now compare very favorably with prices in Western Europe. For many types of coal, particularly small coal, the prices are below those asked in Western Europe.

It is expected that there will be a big shift to coal imports from Poland instead of from England, Westphalia, and the Saar -- unless these latter lower their prices greatly too. The agreement just concluded with Poland is of great importance to Sweden as far as the balance of trade and the payment of her claims against Poland are concerned.

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NEW POLISH TRADE AGREEMENTS -- Trybuna Ludu, No 83, 24 Mar 50

On 22 March 1950, Poland signed a trade agreement with Holland for the remainder of 1950. Poland's exports will include coal, grain, lumber, clothing, glass, and porcelain.

Holland will supply Poland with cotton, wool, fats, flax, raw materials for chemicals, and machines.

At the same time Poland signed a trade agreement for the same period with the Republic of Indonesia. According to this agreement Poland will receive tin, rubber, copra, tea, and quinine in exchange for pipes, nails, machines, chemicals, glass, etc.

The total value of commodities exchanged will amount to 110 billion Dutch guilders.

TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA -- Polska Zbrojna, No 85, 26 Mar 50

The Office of Foreign Trade has made a number of purchase and sales contracts with the Chinese People's Republic. Poland has purchased soya, tea, tobacco, tungsten concentrates, and tallow. The Chinese trade organizations have purchased textiles, rolled products, metal products, tools, and chemicals from Poland.

In addition to this, the Ministry of Foreign Trade has signed an agreement for reciprocal trade until the signing of a formal trade agreement between the two countries, which is to take place in the near future.

POLISH-GERMAN TRADE RELATIONS -- Dziennik Lodzki, No 88, 29 Mar 50

Polish-German commodity exchange has been going on since 1946 in accordance with the trade agreements concluded with the Soviet Zone. The current trade agreement between Poland and the German Democratic Republic was concluded 29 March 1949. On 29 December 1949, a supplementary agreement was signed which specified that Poland supply the German Democratic Republic with additional amounts of black coal, coke, seeds, etc.; Germany would supply Poland with investment goods, steam and water pipe fittings, furniture, wood products, film, glassware, etc.

POLISH-BRITISH TRADE AGREEMENT FOR 1950 -- Rzeczpospolita, No 78, 19 Mar 50

According to the Polish-British trade agreement for 1950, signed 17 March 1950, the total commodity exchange will be greater than in 1949. Poland will export bacon, eggs, poultry, and other foodstuffs valued at 16 million pounds, textiles, chemicals, furniture, porcelain, glass products, and other items valued at 2,200,000 pounds.

Poland will import from Britain motor vehicles, machines, insulating material, technical equipment and instruments, pharmaceuticals, and other items valued at 1,300,000 pounds.

Deliveries to Poland of investment equipment from Great Britain as well as raw materials such as, wool, rubber, iron alloys, tin, cocoa, etc., will continue in accordance with the five-year agreement signed 14 January 1949.

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